



SAFETY OF CHILDREN / UNATTENDED CHILDREN POLICY

The Aquinnah Public Library welcomes children of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, collections and programs offered by the library. We endeavor to make the library a warm, inviting and safe place for children. Service to children is an important part of the library's mission. The following policies have been established to implement the library board's concern for the safety and welfare of the children it serves:

The library is free and open to unaccompanied children who are eight years of age and over and to younger children accompanied by an adult caregiver.

Parents should refer to the library's Technology Use Policy for information on Children's Use of the Internet.

Parents or guardians are responsible for the behavior of their children at all times while in the library. Rules regarding disruptive behavior in the Library's General Conduct Code apply to children as well. If a child violates the General Conduct Code, he/she may be asked to leave the library.

The library staff is responsible for performing library service duties and cannot be responsible for the care or safety of unattended children.

Staff may contact the Aquinnah Police Department if a parent or guardian of an unattended child cannot be located.

If a child is left at the library after closing time, or as the result of an emergency closing, the police will be called. Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child out of the building or transport children to another location. Two staff members will remain with the child until the police or parent or guardian arrives.

In case of medical emergency when parents are not with the child, staff will contact 911, and the parents, in that order.

Library Staff are mandated by MA General Laws, Ch. 119 Section 51A to report suspected child abuse.

Safety of Children Procedures:

If the General Conduct Code is violated, staff may ask a child to leave the library building. If the child is considered unattended (under the age of eight), staff will do the following:

1. Attempt to contact parent/guardian.
2. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached or cannot arrange to immediately pick up the child, staff may place the child in the care of the appropriate law enforcement agency.